

Mr. DELAY. Absolutely, I will let the gentleman know, so he will have plenty of time to write a motion to instruct.

Mr. HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Leader. Will there definitely be votes next Friday?

Mr. DELAY. If the gentleman would yield, "definitely" is a very tough word in this business and on this floor. I would think, looking at the work ahead of us, that the probability of having votes on Friday is more to the affirmative than to the negative.

Mr. HOYER. The gentleman certainly has outlined some very significant pieces of legislation that may be on the floor.

Mr. DELAY. If the gentleman would yield, I do want to repeat that it is very possible that we could have votes on Friday and we intend to pass the War Supplemental Conference Report and send it to the President before we break for the break. And if things get a little difficult, we could actually be here through the weekend.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for his comment and I hear him talking about the supplemental. Does the leader believe that the budget conference report is a necessary piece of legislation for us to pass before we leave? I know you mentioned that you might want to try to do that, but does your side believe that is necessary before we leave next week?

Mr. DELAY. If the gentleman would yield, I have not personally consulted with the Speaker or the rest of the leadership, but it is my own understanding that the conference report on the budget is as important as doing the supplemental. But the word that I have is things are progressing with that conference report. There are very few issues to resolve, and we have the greatest expectation that that conference report will be on the floor sometime next week and will not slow down our ability to go into the Easter break.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that comment.

Related to the budget conference, Mr. Leader, do you expect that we will have a debt limit vote on the floor either as a part of the conference report or as a freestanding bill of some type or other in the week to come?

Mr. DELAY. If the gentleman would yield, the gentleman is very well aware that we reinstituted a very important rule called the Gephardt rule that includes in the budget conference report the number that is needed in order to raise the debt ceiling. So the vote on the conference report as far as the House is concerned is the vote on the debt ceiling.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for reminding me. Is that the same Gephardt rule that the minority, when the Democrats were in control, thought was undemocratic, masked the desire of Democrats to raise the debt limit and spend more money; is that the same rule you are talking about re-instituting and you have reinstituted

and are going to apply? I just want to clarify and make sure that is the same awful rule that you attacked so vigorously when you were in the minority.

Mr. DELAY. I think it is a different rule. I think it is the Hastert rule now.

Mr. HOYER. A rule by any other name, my friend.

The energy bill, Mr. Leader, do you have a pretty good estimate as to which day of the week that bill might come to the floor?

Mr. DELAY. If the gentleman would yield, as the gentleman knows, this is a very complicated piece of legislation that has had at least four committees consider. All four committees have reported, and we have to get together with the minority to pull this bill together and bring it to the floor, and we hope to schedule that bill for some time on Wednesday; if not Wednesday, on Thursday of next week.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

May I also ask him, and I see the chairman of the Committee on Rules on the floor, you correctly observed, Mr. Leader, this is a complicated bill, a lot of different subjects, very important subjects, very consequential subjects. What, if you know, perhaps the chairman of the Committee on Rules knows, do you contemplate an open rule such as the rule we had on the floor today?

Mr. DELAY. The discussion in the Committee on Rules has not been forthcoming, and certainly we would hope that a rule would be fashioned to give every Member of the House the greatest opportunity to express himself on a very important and complicated piece of legislation like the energy bill.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, we share the leader's hope.

I yield to the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. DREIER. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I would say that the majority leader has outlined the goal that the Committee on Rules has on every piece of legislation. We demonstrated that this evening, allowing an opportunity for Members to consider a wide range of issues. And we know, as has been said by everyone, that the energy bill is going to be a very complex piece of legislation. There are a number of committees that have been involved in the process, and we anxiously look forward to resolving some of those questions in the Committee on Rules, and then we will come forward with an opportunity for a wide range of considerations.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, I would say again in all sincerity to my friend, the chairman of the Committee on Rules, and the leader, this is the kind of legislation, which you are absolutely correct, which is very serious, very complicated, and ought to have the fullest airing on the floor of this House. Obviously, it has had a full airing in a number of committees.

□ 2310

We would urge and very strongly hope that the goal that the gentleman

has expressed as his will, in fact, be followed so that alternatives can be offered by committee or individual Members on this side of the aisle as well as that side of the aisle when this bill comes to the floor.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I would just say that we will certainly take the recommendation of our friend, the minority whip, into consideration as we proceed; and I thank my friend for yielding.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2003

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY COMMITTEE ON RULES REGARDING H.R. 1036, PROTECTION OF LAWFUL COM- MERCE IN ARMS ACT OF 2003

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules may meet the week of April 7 to grant a rule which could limit the amendment process for floor consideration of H.R. 1036, the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act.

Any Member wishing to offer an amendment should submit 55 copies of the amendment and one copy of a brief explanation of the amendment to the Committee on Rules in Room H-312 of the Capitol by 10 a.m. on Tuesday, April 8. Members should draft their amendment to the bill as reported by the Committee on the Judiciary on April 3, 2003.

Members are advised that the text should be available for their review on the Web sites of the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Rules today.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Council to ensure that their amendments are drafted in the most appropriate format. Members are also advised to check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain their amendments comply with the rules of the House.